

Mir, the Canonical CLA and skewing the playing field

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Like many Canonical-led projects, Mir is under GPLv3 - a strong copyleft license. There's a couple of aspects of GPLv3 that are intended to protect users from being unable to make use of the rights that the license grants them. The first is that if GPLv3 code is shipped as part of a user product, it must be possible for the user to replace that GPLv3 code. That's a problem if your device is intended to be locked down enough that it can only run vendor code. The second is that it grants an explicit patent license to downstream recipients, permitting them to make use of those patents in derivative works.

One of the consequences of these obligations is that companies whose business models depend on either selling locked-down devices or licensing patents tend to be fairly reluctant to ship GPLv3 software. In effect, this is GPLv3 acting entirely as intended - unless you're willing to guarantee that a user can exercise the freedoms defined by the free software definition, you don't get to ship GPLv3 material. Some companies have decided that shipping GPLv3 code would be more expensive than either improving existing code under a more liberal license or writing new code from scratch.

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Also: [Canonical's Mir move doesn't sit well with some Linux developers](#) [4]

And: [Ubuntu community donation plans detailed](#) [5]

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[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/72>

[2] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/121>

[3] <http://mjb59.dreamwidth.org/25376.html>

[4] http://www.computerworld.com.au/article/465500/canonical_mir_move_doesn_t_sit_well_some_linux_developers/

[5] <http://www.h-online.com/open/news/item/Ubuntu-community-donation-plans-detailed-1893421.html>